



Retrieved from: <http://www.cifas.us/smith/books.html>

Title: *The Ras Tafari Movement in Kingston, Jamaica*

Author(s): M.G. Smith (With R. Augier and R. M. Nettleford).

Published by: Institute of Social and Economic Research, University College of the West Indies, 1960. 54p.

Reprinted in: Reprinted in 1968, and in *Caribbean Quarterly*, vol. 13, no. 3, (September 1967), pp. 3-29; and vol. 13, no. 4 (December 1967), pp. 3-14.

Jamilio Comite

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF THE WEST INDIES

THE RAS TAFARI MOVEMENT IN KINGSTON, JAMAICA.

By

M. G. Smith

Roy Augier

Rex Nettleford

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH

1960

CONTENTS

Foreword

Chapter	I Introduction	7
	II History of the Movement	8
	III Recent Developments	15
	IV The Doctrines of the Movement	22
	V The Movement's Current Organisation	28
	VI What Ras Tafari Brethren Want	33
	VII Summary of Recommendations	38

Appendices

I Letter: Land Grant	39
II Letters: Ethiopian Orthodox Church	41
III Niyabingi Men	43
IV The Creed of a Ras Tafari Man	48

Foreword

20th July, 1960.

My dear Premier,

At the request of some prominent members of the Ras Tafari brethren, three members of the U.C.W.I. staff, Roy Augier, Rex Nettleford, and M. G. Smith, spent every day of two weeks with Ras Tafari brethren, making a survey of the movement, its organisation and its aspirations. They have produced a report, which I enclose herewith.

The team has made a number of recommendations, which require urgent consideration. The movement is large, and in a state of great unrest. Its problems require priority treatment.

Though the movement has no single leader, or group of leaders, it is willing to produce a small group of prominent representatives to discuss with the Government the recommendations contained in this report. I very much hope that you may be able to arrange such a meeting at the earliest possible opportunity.

Yours sincerely,

(Sgd.) W. A. Lewis

Principal.

Hon. N. W. Manley

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to present a brief account of the growth, doctrines, organisation, aspirations, needs and conditions of the Ras Tafari movement in Jamaica, especially in Kingston, the capital. The data presented here were collected during a rapid survey among the Ras Tafari brethren of Kingston during the fortnight beginning on July 4th 1960. This survey arose out of letters written to the Principal of the U.C.W.I., Professor Arthur Lewis, and to the Resident Tutor, Extra-Mural Studies, Mr. Rex Nettleford, by members of the Ras Tafari brethren living in Kingston. These letters asked the College to assist the brethren in various ways, especially in the educational field, and by publicising the truth about the brethren and their doctrine. In view of these diverse requests, a meeting was arranged at which Professor Lewis discussed the appeals with a number of brethren and offered to send a team of three faculty members to work among them for a fortnight in order to determine the predominant needs of the brethren, and to formulate a programme of action. Mr. Horace Gordon of the Jamaica Social Welfare Commission, who helped to arrange this meeting, acted as Chairman. By kind permission of the Rev. M. E. W. Sawyers, Chairman of the Jones Town Government School, the discussion took place there on Monday 4th July from 8.30 to 11.00 p.m. The assembly having declared their support for the College survey, it began the next morning.

This is not the first occasion on which the University College of the West Indies has been involved in a study of the Ras Tafari movement. In 1953 Professor George Eaton Simpson of Oberlin College, Ohio, U.S.A. carried out a field study among four Ras Tafari groups in Kingston under the sponsorship of the Institute of Social and Economic Research, U.C.W.I. In 1955 Professor Simpson published his findings in two articles, "The Ras Tafari Movement in Jamaica: A Study of Race and Class Conflict" (*Social Forces*, vol. 34, No. 2), and "Political Cultism in West Kingston" (*Social and Economic Studies*, Vol. 4, No. 2). The second of these articles which was published by the U.C.W.I. is the more informative; but both essays concentrate on a thematic treatment of Ras Tafari doctrine, descriptions of street meetings and worship, paying little attention to the history, organisation or background of the movement. As we shall see, the nature of the cult has changed quite significantly since 1953, and Professor Simpson's account has to be brought up to date. Simpson's early work enabled the present survey to proceed far more rapidly and effectively than would have been possible otherwise.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY OF THE MOVEMENT

During the 1920's, Jamaica knew two prophets. One of them, a man called Bedward, attempted to fly to heaven, was tried and placed in the mental hospital as a lunatic, dying there. Bedward left behind him a settlement at August Town near the University College. The other, and by far the more important prophet, was Marcus Garvey, who founded the Universal Negro Improvement Association in the United States, proclaimed black nationalism, and preached "Africa for the Africans – at home and abroad": "One God, one aim, one destiny." Garvey sought to found a black state in Africa to which Negroes from the Western world would be transported, and this was one of the objects of the Black Star Line. This Line was a failure, but Garvey's message was a success, and will continue to attract the support of black peoples for generations to come. Only recently, Dr. Kwame Nkrumah placed Garvey's symbol of the Black Star Line in the centre of the Ghana flag. The Garvey message gave American Negroes a racial pride and strength they sorely needed. Garvey's tradition continues among the Negroes of Chicago, New York and similar Northern cities.

In 1927 Marcus Garvey was deported from the United States and returned to his homeland, Jamaica, preaching his doctrine of black racial pride and return to Africa. It seemed that he was a prophet without honour in his own country. The whites and browns disliked the doctrine. The blacks found it rather onerous, for Garvey emphasised the virtues of thrift, hard work, perseverance and foresight, and relied on his followers to pay their way to Africa by their own efforts. Although he kept his headquarters in Jamaica until 1935, he made little headway here. In 1929 he was imprisoned briefly for contempt of court. He was elected to the K.S.A.C. in February 1930, but failed to win a seat in the Legislative Council. In 1935 he left Jamaica for England where he died in 1940.

The Jamaica to which Garvey returned must have seemed to him not very different in its racial organisation from the American areas with which he was familiar. Garvey is said to have told his people to "Look to Africa, when a black king shall be crowned, for the day of deliverance is near." He is also said to have prophesied that his people would be redeemed and returned to Africa in the 1960's, and according to some people, in 1960.

Truth has two levels in social affairs. There are actual events, and there are statements about actual events. Statements believed to be true are often sociologically more important than those which are true. What people believe or assert emphatically, represents a social force which cannot be disposed of merely by denial. For the Ras Tafari brethren today, Garvey is a major prophet,

but his relationship with the founders of the Ras Tafari movement between 1930 and 1935 remains obscure.

In November 1930, Ras Tafari was crowned as the Emperor Haile Sellassie, King of Kings, Lord of Lords, and the conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah. The *Daily Gleaner* featured this coronation on the front page of its issue of November 11th 1930. Some Jamaicans of a Garveyite persuasion say that they then began to consult their Bibles. Could this be he of whom Garvey spoke? A number of texts showed that it was. Revelation 5:2, 5 – “And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, ‘Who is worthy to open the Book, and to loose the seals thereof? . . . And one of the elders saith unto me, ‘Weep not: behold, the Lion of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the Book and to loose the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.’” Later, when the Italians invaded Ethiopia, Revelation 19:19 was fulfilled – “And I saw the Beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, against his army.” In 1941, with the Emperor’s return to Ethiopia, the succeeding verse was fulfilled – “And the Beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had the mark of the Beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.”

The doctrine that Ras Tafari, known to the world as the Emperor Haile Sellassie I of Ethiopia, is the Living God, was developed by several persons independently. Of these Mr. Leonard P. Howell is genuinely regarded as being the first to preach the divinity of Ras Tafari in Kingston. Howell is said to have fought against King Prempeh of Ashanti (1896), and claimed to speak an African language. ‘*The Promised Key*’, a basic Ras Tafari text, published in Accra, Ghana around 1930, shows clear evidence of Jamaican authorship. (*Jamaica Times* 28th May 1938). Howell also spent several years in the north-eastern U.S., where he came into contact with black and white racism.

Another early preacher was Mr. Joseph Nathaniel Hibbert. Mr. Hibbert was born in Jamaica in 1894, but went with his adopted father to Costa Rica in 1911, returning to Jamaica in 1931. In Costa Rica Mr. Hibbert had leased 28 acres, which he put in bananas. In 1924 he had joined the Ancient Mystic Order of Ethiopia, a Masonic society the constitution of which was revised in 1888, and which became incorporated in 1928 in Panama. Mr. Hibbert became a Master Mason of this Order, and, returning to Jamaica, began to preach Haile Sellassie as the King of Kings, the returned Messiah and the Redeemer of Israel. This was at Benoa District, St. Andrew, from whence he moved to Kingston to find Howell already preaching Ras Tafari as God at the Redemption Market.

Mr. H. Archibald Dunkley is another man who may claim to have brought the doctrine to Jamaica. Mr. Dunkley was a Jamaican seaman on the Atlantic Fruit Company’s boats, and finally quit the sea on the 8th December 1930, when he landed at Port Antonio off the s.s. ‘St. Mary’. Coming to Kingston,

Dunkley studied the Bible for two-and-a-half years on his own, to determine whether Haile Sellassie was the Messiah whom Garvey had prophesied. Ezekiel 30, I Timothy 6, Revelation 17 and 19 and Isaiah 43 finally convinced him. In 1933 Dunkley opened his Mission, preaching Ras Tafari as the King of Kings, the Root of David, the Son of the Living God, but not the Father Himself. Other early preachers include Robert Hinds, who joined Howell, and Altamont Read who turned his following over to one Mr. Johnson when he became Mr. N. W. Manley's bodyguard about 1940.

Another somewhat more secular stream was meanwhile developing on the Kingston Dungle. There, Messrs. Paul Erlington, Vernal Davis, Ferdinand Ricketts and others had been in the habit of discussing Garvey's doctrines and the social conditions in Jamaica which justified them. The emphasis of this group was on social reform in Jamaica as well as migration to Africa. Remembering Garvey's words — that when a king is crowned in Africa the time is near — they lent a willing ear to the doctrines preached by Howell, Hibbert and Dunkley independently, and some time in 1934, under the influence of Robert Hinds, this group recognised Haile Sellassie as the Living God.

The early Ras Tafari Missions originated and developed independently. Dunkley's efforts was the King of Kings Missionary Movement; this had no headquarters, officers, or constitution. Dunkley confined his preaching to Kingston. In 1932 Hibbert, on hearing Howell preach at a street meeting in Kingston, asked for a brief spell on the platform, after which Howell asked him to help him in Kingston as he, Howell, was going to preach at Port Morant. Like Dunkley, Howell at that time had no formal constitution, rules or account of his mission. While Howell was in St. Thomas' Parish, Hibbert formed the body of Howell's followers into a group called the Ethiopian Coptic Faith, with a definite organisation, procedure, and rules. On returning from St. Thomas, Howell rejected this order, removing its banner and membership with him and leaving Hibbert to carry on alone. Hibbert continued preaching, and on one or two occasions Dunkley, whose ideas had much in common with his, spoke on Hibbert's platform. With his mystical orientation and Masonic discipline, Hibbert proceeded to develop the Ethiopian Coptic Church on orderly lines, and for this purpose had certain extracts from the *Ethiopic Bible of St. Sosimas*, including the *Ethiopia Dascalia* (Apostolic Constitution), printed at his own expenses by the Star Printery, Kingston, for the instruction of his followers. Dunkley, who lacked this background, continued to base his teaching on the King James version of the Bible.

The most successful early preacher was undoubtedly L. P. Howell, who moved between Kingston and Port Morant until 1940, with Robert Hinds as his deputy in Kingston. He had the largest following and was the most effective propagandist. On December 16th 1933 the *Daily Gleaner* reported that Howell was selling photographs of the Emperor in St. Thomas for one shilling each. (*Daily Gleaner*, 16/12/33, p.1.) Informants say that about 5,000 postcard-size photographs were distributed in this way, the purchasers being informed that this was their passport to Ethiopia. On January 5th 1934 the *Daily Gleaner*

reported Howell's arrest at Port Morant. His trial was well publicised in the **Daily Gleaner** of 15th March 1934 (p.20) and 17th March 1934 (p.6). Howell was sent to gaol for two years for sedition.

On December 7th 1935 the **Jamaica Times** published an account of the so-called Niyabingi Order in Ethiopia and the Congo (see Appendix). This was just a few months after Italy had invaded Ethiopia. Both Ethiopia and Haile Sellassie were in the news. According to the account in the **Times**, the Ethiopian Emperor was head of the Niyabingi Order, the purpose of which was the overthrow of white domination by racial war. This violent note had already been struck by Howell, and Niyabingi was defined in Jamaica as "Death to black and white oppressors". Some of those people who worshipped the Emperor and were locally known as 'Ras Tafari' or 'Rastamen' came to describe themselves as 'Niyamen' — that is, members of Niyabingi. The Niyabingi commitment to racial violence generalised the violence already preached by Howell.

The police were not slow to act. Besides arresting Howell, they charged Dunkley with disorderly conduct while holding a meeting at Bond Street and Spanish Town Road, Kingston, on September 11th 1934. Shortly after this, Dunkley was sent to gaol for 30 days on a similar charge at Morant Bay. On the 20th February 1935 he was placed in the Half-Way-Tree lock-up and from there removed to the Asylum, where he remained for five months and twenty-one days. J. N. Hibbert was also arrested on three occasions in 1935; once in Port Morant, where he had gone to correct Howell's doctrinal errors, and twice in Kingston, being fined 30/- for disorderly conduct after apprehension on a charge of lunacy.

On his release from prison, Howell is said to have run a bakery and occupied premises at 108 Princess Street, Oxford Street and the corner of Luke Lane and Heywood Street. He established an organisation known as 'The Ethiopian Salvation Society', which was said to be a local branch of an American organisation. This Society was apparently registered under the Friendly Societies Law. To quote Howell's defence in a later trial:

"In May 1940 he purchased Pinnacle on behalf of the Society in America for the branch in Jamaica. Apart from himself, over five hundred members of the Society resided at Pinnacle. The members did not pay any rent for living there. They burnt coal and lime, and cultivated portions of the property, which was a large one. The proceeds of this, after the Manager had taken out a portion for food allowance and clothing, went to the funds of the Society." (**Daily Gleaner** 25th August 1941, p.16).

Pinnacle, which is near Sligoville, was an abandoned estate when Howell acquired it. Informants relate that he moved there with about 1,600 followers from Kingston and Port Morant. By the middle of 1941 the police were taking action against the Pinnacle community. The **Daily Gleaner** of July 15th (p.1), 16th (p.16), 17th (p.1), 18th (p.1), 23rd (p.9), 26th (p.1), 29th (p.14), 31st (p.16), August 19th (p.6) and August 25th (p.15) gave full reports of this action and its

results. 70 Ras Tafari followers of Howell from more than 600 who lived at the Pinnacle camp were arrested, mainly on charges of growing ganja and violence. 28 of these were sent to prison. Howell evaded the police for several days, but was found on July 25th 1941 and brought before the court on 18th August that year, being convicted and sent to Spanish Town Prison for two years. Howell was convicted on four charges of assaulting people, not for growing ganja. Peasants settled on the environs of Pinnacle complained that their holdings were subject to raids from the Pinnacle community, and that they were often assaulted when seeking to claim their own property. One deposition cited Howell as saying, "I will give you ninety-six lashes, I will beat you and let you know to pay no taxes. I am Haile Sellassie, neither you nor the Government have any lands here." (Daily Gleaner, 31:7:41, p.16).

The account of life at Pinnacle which is presented by these newspaper reports corresponds closely with that given to us by Ras Tafari brethren. Some brethren say that at Pinnacle, Howell represented himself as God and took the title of Gangungu Maraj or more familiarly, Gong. He is said to have lived in a large house with thirteen wives or concubines. His followers worked the estate under his direction: yam was the main subsistence crop, and ganja (also known as marihuana, hashish, Indian hemp, or simply 'the herb') was the main cash crop. The trade in ganja is said to have been controlled. Howell is said to have acquired property at Rollington Town, Kingston and in the parish of Portland.

In 1943 Howell returned to Pinnacle after being released from prison. His second administration seems to have been fairly similar to the first. His guardsmen grew their locks and were referred to as 'Ethiopian warriors'. Savage dogs assisted the guards. Strangers entering the estate gate were announced by beating on gongs. Howell paid the taxes on Pinnacle himself, redistributing the plots among his followers as he thought fit. By all accounts, Pinnacle seems to have been rather more like an old Maroon settlement than part of Jamaica. Its internal administration was Howell's business, not Government's. It is therefore understandable that the unit could have persisted as a state within a state for several years without the people or Government of Jamaica being aware of it. Howell's men continued to raid their neighbours around Pinnacle, but lacking protection, these people kept silent. From 1933 Howell had been preaching violence, and apparently at Pinnacle this doctrine and body of attitudes took definite form. In 1954 the police finally broke up the settlement, after accumulating evidence that ganja was being grown there on a large scale. 163 persons were said to have been arrested, including Howell; but the latter was acquitted with three lieutenants on appeal. Thereafter he remained in Kingston, discredited among the brethren because he had made claims to divinity, and early this year he was confined to the Mental Hospital.

From the earliest days, many Ras Tafari brethren had worn beards and let their hair grow, because of Ezekiel 5 and other Scriptures. Up at Pinnacle a further development occurred, probably after photographs of Somali, Masai, Galla and other tribes in or near the Ethiopian border had become current.

This was the plaiting of long hair by men known as the 'men of dreadlocks' or simply 'locksmen'. These men of dreadlocks were the Ethiopian Warriors and the self-declared Niyamen. Numbers 6:i, ii, v provides the Biblical basis for this practice. "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying: 'Speak unto the children of Israel and say unto them, When either man or woman shall separate themselves to vow the vow of a Nazarite, to separate themselves unto the Lord . . . all the days if the vow of the separation there shall no razor come upon his head: until the days he fulfilled in the which he separateth himself unto the Lord, he shall be holy and shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow.'" According to informants, the men of Dreadlocks first began to appear in Kingston round about 1947.

Meanwhile other developments had taken place. In 1937 the Emperor Haile Selassie empowered Dr. Malaku E. Bayen, who later edited *The March of Black Men: Ethiopia Leads* (Voice of Ethiopia Press, New York, U.S.A., 1939) to establish the Ethiopian World Federation Inc. This organisation came into being on August 25th, 1937 in New York City, with the purpose set out in the following preamble: "We, the Black Peoples of the World, in order to effect Unity, Solidarity, Liberty, Freedom and self-determination, to secure Justice and maintain the Integrity of Ethiopia, which is our divine heritage, do hereby establish and ordain this constitution for the Ethiopian World Federation Inc." (The Constitution and By-Laws of the Ethiopian World Federation, 1937, p.4). This Constitution and By-Laws is, as one would expect, a very careful and businesslike document, having articles which deal with aims and objects, membership, international officers and their duties, conventions, elections, meetings, local branches, their establishment and organisation, committees, impeachments of officers, units, benefits, amendments, order of business, etc. The document runs to 30 pages. The first Local was established in New York by Dr. Bayen in 1937. The first Local to be established in Jamaica was Local 17, which Paul Erlington set up in August 1938 with one Mr. Mantle as its first president, and Erlington as Vice-President. Hibbert, Dunkley and those adherents of the Ras Tafari doctrine other than Howell's supporters were foundation members of this Local, which quickly became dormant. The third President, Mr. C. P. Jackson, was dismissed for contempt of the members. Miss Green, his successor, whose appointment was a compromise between rivals, soon removed herself together with the Charter of the Local.

Local 17 having died, Local 31 was then established with Mr. William Powell as its first President. This was in 1942. Disputes about leadership and operations continued until Mr. Cecil Gordon assumed the Presidency, which he then held for a number of years. Paul Erlington had gone to America during this period, and his early colleagues, Vernal Davis and Ricketts, who joined Local 31, soon got into difficulties with its leaders.

Meanwhile the doctrine was spreading and a number of less formal groups emerged, some of which were the Ethiopian Coptic Church, the United Ethiopian Body, under Brothers Claudius Stewart and Joseph Myers, the United Afro-West Indian Brotherhood under Mr. Rafael Downer, the Ethiopian Youth

Cosmic Faith under Brother Edie, who has since gone to England, the African Cultural League, and the Brotherhood Solidarity of United Ethiopians (B.S.U.E.), linked to the local Ethiopian World Federation movement loosely, if at all. J. N. Hibbert had established in 1941 a local branch of the Ethiopian Mystic Masons, which was closely connected with his Ethiopian Coptic Church. By 1944 this branch had become dormant, due to the emigration of its members to Panama. Many other small groups which had sprung up in the movement in this period suffered a similar fate. In 1953 Simpson estimated that there were twelve groups of Ras Tafari brethren in Kingston, having memberships ranging between 20 and 150. He noted that at that time the public seemed to have little interest in or overt resentment of the brethren, who were none the less regarded with contempt and disgust, especially the locksmen. Police interference was negligible, except for periodic ganja raids.

CHAPTER III

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

In 1953 when Professor George Simpson studied the Ras Tafari brethren in Kingston, the various groups operated independently and attracted little public notice; but the Ras Tafari movement as a whole was on the verge of important developments. Pinnacle was raided in 1954, and the increase in the number of dreadlocks men in Kingston dates from then. 1955 saw a very large expansion of the activities of the Ethiopian World Federation in Jamaica. The commencement of large scale emigration to Britain, the decline of revivalism in Jamaica, and the activities of the political parties, all gave a fillip to the movement, which has since grown very rapidly.

In 1954 the police invaded Pinnacle and many of Howell's followers went to gaol. Others scattered, some to Kingston, others to Vere or other parts of the country. The number of locksmen in Kingston increased at this time. Howell, a broken force as far as the Ras Tafari brethren were concerned, ceased to be a leader. The country had been alerted to the scale of ganja production, and in 1957 the Government denied the special privileges claimed by the Maroons of Accompong after a well publicised lawsuit, involving ganja cultivation. Colonel Michelin, then Commissioner of Police, ordered several drives against ganja cultivation and traffic. The number of prison sentences on these grounds increased sharply. Since the Ras Tafari brethren were known to praise and esteem ganja, they were an obvious target for these raids. Bad blood increased between the brethren and the police. From 1954, police had acted against bands of locksmen in Kingston; one group of 18 was arrested, charged with contempt of Court, then with rioting, and finally with assembling with a view to rioting. Twelve of these were sent to gaol for fifteen months each. In the same year another group of 32 locksmen were arrested at North Street while marching with banner and Bible, demanding freedom. (*Daily Gleaner*, 17.4.54, p.1). Clearly, the break-up of Pinnacle was linked with this sudden appearance of marching bands of locksmen in Kingston. The police, after their experience of Pinnacle, may have assumed that groups of locksmen were of Howell's persuasion, bent on trouble. Perhaps for this reason the police were quick to act before trouble broke out. They are also said to have shaved and beaten locksmen accosted in these groups.

In 1955 Mrs. Maymie Richardson came to Jamaica on behalf of the headquarters of the Ethiopian World Federation Inc. to expound its doctrine and organise further Locals. There was a rush of informal groups into the E.W.F., and shortly afterwards Locals 27, 11, 37, 32, 33, 19, 40, 41, 43 and 77 were established, most of these receiving their Charter during November 1955. Local 11 at Rock Hall, St. Andrew, Local 32 at Montego Bay and Local 25 at Spanish Town are the only branches outside of Kingston. Only two Locals, numbers

19 under Cecil G. Gordon, and 31 are registered with Government. Gordon had left Local 31 to establish 19 when Mrs. Richardson came. Unregistered Locals are loosely attached to those recognised by Government. Downer's United Afro-West Indian Brotherhood became Local 7 in 1955, and Hibbert's Ethiopian Coptic Church became Local 27. The B.S.U.E. and the African Cultural League joined together to form Local 37. After Brother Edie had left for England, members of the Ethiopian Youth Cosmic Faith moved into Locals 7 and 33. H. Archibald Dunkley, on a prophetic interpretation of the Scriptures, acquired the Charter for Local 77 and wound up the King of Kings Mission and that Local forthwith. Local 40 came to grief when the man who had paid more than half of the establishment and members' dues found that a rival intended to collect the Charter and pass it on to one of the leaders of the Marxist People's Freedom Movement. He quickly confiscated the Charter, and the Local never met again. Local 41 consists of women only. Mr. Cecil Gordon, the President of Local 19, visited the United States in 1956 for the 17th Annual Convention of the E.W.F.Inc., and returned as Second International Vice-President for the Caribbean. Mr. R. R. I. Maclean and Mr. Lloyd Brooks, the President of Local 13, are both Deputy International Organisers and Officers of the New York headquarters. Certain groups already established such as the Ethiopian Body continued to remain aloof from the Federation, split, and developed their own branch organisations. Other groups, such as the United United Afro-West Indian Brotherhood, continue to function as Missions in St. Ann's Bay and Montego Bay, and Local 32 came into being in this way. Many more Ras Tafari brethren were still unaffiliated to organisations of any sort. Some members of E.W.F. Locals established their own movements while remaining affiliated to their Local; thus, the United African Nationalist Movement is headed by certain members of Local 37 and represents a Missionary effort to recruit adherents ostensibly for enrolment in the E.W.F. branches.

In 1955 the Jamaican migration to Britain assumed major proportions (G. W. Roberts and D. O. Mills, 1958, "Study of External Migration Affecting Jamaica 1953-55"; *Social & Economic Studies* Vol. 7, No. 2, p.45), and in the same year the executive of the Ethiopian World Federation Inc. at 151 Lenox Avenue, New York 27, wrote to the Executive Committee of Local 31, informing them that the Emperor Haile Sellassie I had granted "500 acres of very fertile and rich land . . . through the Ethiopian World Federation Inc., to the Black People of the West, who aided Ethiopia during her period of distress". With the migration to Britain underway, and the opportunity for migration to Ethiopia apparently open, the Messianic cult which Professor Simpson had studied in 1953 became a full-blown belief in mass migration.

In June 1955 one of the writers visited St. Elizabeth to carry out a survey of labour and employment conditions. All households in a given area were to be enumerated. Almost to a man, the people interviewed regarded the survey as a census by Government of all those who wanted to go to Africa. With the rapid increase of emigration to Britain, the movement to Africa was also in the air.

In 1955 Mr. Brandford of Trench Town, Kingston is said to have approached certain City merchants, asking for clothes in which to go to Ethiopia. He had dreamed that the Emperor told him to prepare and proceed to Palisadoes Airport, Kingston, where aircraft were awaiting him and his followers. In late 1955 and 1956 other groups went to the various Kingston piers after receiving similar messages, and sought passages on boats. Garvey is reported to have said that No. 1 Pier and No. 2 Pier and Victoria Pier would be filled with boats waiting to take the people back to Africa. Ghana was just becoming independent. Liberia was said to be inviting West Indian immigrants. The Emperor himself had authorised the Ethiopian World Federation Inc., New York to organise black settlers to occupy lands which he had personally made available from his own estate in Ethiopia.

We have now to go back a few years to introduce a musical note. Until 1930, Revivalism (pocomania and Zion) had a ritual monopoly among the Jamaican folk, rural and urban. This cult, described by Professor George Simpson (Geo. E. Simpson 1956 – "Jamaican Revivalist Cults" – *Social & Economic Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 4, pp 321-442) was frankly polytheistic and stressed an autocratic leadership of small competing groups. Revival, which spread throughout Jamaica after the Great Revival of 1861, had displaced earlier tribal cults, only one of which, the Cumina of St. Thomas and West Kingston, still retains its original form. (Jos. G. Moore & Geo. E. Simpson, "A Comparative Study of Acculturation in Morant Bay & West Kingston" – *Zaire* 1957 – Nos. 9-10 pp 979-1019 and 1958 No. 1, pp 65-87 Belgium). Like Cumina, Revival stressed spirit possession and sought this through the dance and the drums. Working with the Ras Tafari and Revival groups in Kingston in 1953, Simpson was especially impressed by their differences, and summarised these as follows:

"All of these cults draw their members from the economically depressed, uneducated lower class of Jamaica. Revivalists and Rastafarians are bitter enemies, and have nothing but contempt for one another. We have referred earlier to the authoritarianism of Revivalist cults and the democracy of the Ras Tafari movement. Spirit possession, a prominent feature of Revivalist meetings, never occurs in a Ras Tafari gathering. Witchcraft and healing, exceedingly important activities in both Revivalist bands, are not practised by the Rasta people. In the four Ras Tafari groups I observed, the ubiquitous drums of the Revivalists were replaced by rhumba-boxes. Otherwise the musical instruments were much the same, consisting mainly of rattles and tambourines." (Geo. E. Simpson, 1955, "The Ras Tafari Movement in Jamaica: A Study of Race and Class Conflict." *Social Forces*, Vol. 34, No. 2, p.169).

Simpson's studies occurred on the eve of major changes in Jamaican folk religion. Since 1953 Revival or pocomania has steadily lost ground before expanding American Protestant missions, especially the Church of God movement financed originally from the United States. Where there were many flourishing pocomania tabernacles in Kingston, there are now relatively few. Those people who originally practised or preached Revival have either joined the Church

of God, lost faith, moved elsewhere, or drifted in the direction of the monotheistic multi-sided Ras Tafari creed.

One of the older Jamaican musical forms was burra. Burra may have come from the same religious stratum as the Cumina dance; since 1930 it has been mainly confined to the slum areas of Kingston. Burra has three distinctive drums known as the bass, funde and repeater. All are double-membraned drums, the bass being the largest and the funde and repeater being small drums of similar size. The repeater, which is the treble drum, has a tight membrane while that of the funde is slack. The repeater plays the melody, the bass gives the rhythm and the funde syncopates. Cumina and the Big Drum or Nation Dance of the South Caribbean also use three drums of a similar pattern.

In Kingston the burra drums were used for secular dances on holidays but they also had a more specialised function. It was the custom of slum dwellers in the early thirties to welcome discharged prisoners back to their communities by burra drums and dances on the night of their return. Only those who knew the purpose of such a dance would normally join it. Throughout this period no drums were used at Ras Tafari meetings, although Ras Tafari members would often attend these burra dances. With the collapse of Revival in Kingston and the dispersal of Howell's following from Pinnacle, the increase of ganja prosecutions and the police action against Locksmen especially, a new development took place. Many criminals professed the cult and adopted the beard for professional purposes. Of these the late Woppy King who was executed for rape and murder is merely the best-known. Many Ras Tafari brethren became habituated to crime through association with hardened criminals after long sentences in gaol on ganja charges. Those brethren whose avoidance of ganja and locks kept them clear of the police progressively disassociated themselves from the Locksmen among whom the criminals moved more freely. The old burra dance by which discharged prisoners were reintegrated with their slum communities was taken over into the Ras Tafari movement by Locksmen. The burra drums became known as akete drums and the old burra dance was replaced by the Niyabingi dance. The criminal commitment to violence and disorder reinforced the Niyabingi doctrine of "Death to white oppressors and their black allies". Anti-social behaviour became a positive goal for some and a mark of pride of race for others. As more people, including old Revival Shepherds, left pocomania for Ras Tafari, emphasis on drumming increased, and with it the Niyabingi sub-cult of violence. Thus criminality got a foothold within the Ras Tafari movement. The more obvious this seemed to the police, the greater was their 'persecution', and the greater the number of convictions, the more rapid the growth of this element. Its expansion took place at the expense of the more reasonable and orderly section of the Ras Tafari movement.

In March 1958 Prince Edward C. Edwards held a 'Convention' of Ras Tafari brethren at Kingston Pen adjoining Back o' Wall. Handbills had been circulated in advance announcing this Convention. Some brethren from as far afield as Montego Bay sold their belongings and giving away the proceeds came to Kingston in the firm belief that at the end of the Con-

vention they would embark for Africa. The Convention was reported in the *Jamaica Times* (March 8, 1958 pp.1 and 14). Eyewitnesses relate that a large number of old car and tractor tyres were collected at Prince Edward's establishment behind the Tivoli Cinema, that H.E. the Governor, Sir Kenneth Blackburne, visited Edwards' premises before the Convention opened, and that speeches made by young and old on the platform before the assembly consisted of streams of filthy language, which is perfectly in order among some brethren, who hold that no words are bad in themselves. Nightly dances to the akete drums were held around fires fuelled with the collected tyres. Some witnesses indicate that there were guards, "soldiers" and the like policing the place. The Niyabingi dance and theme were publicised through these gatherings, which lasted for 21 days. On one occasion units of the Kingston Fire Brigade were called on to put out the fires which had become threatening. They did this with considerable enthusiasm, dousing the environs at the same time. Thereafter there were no fires. One morning at about 4 a.m. an assembly of Ras Tafari brethren moved in a body to the Parade known as Victoria Park shouting their intention to capture it. On receiving news of this, the police moved to meet them, and after some fighting the Park was cleared.

The Convention, which had apparently attracted three thousand people (*Jamaica Times*, 8th March 1958, p.1) many of whom were Locksmen, seems to have ended without anyone embarking for Africa. Those who had disposed of their property in this belief were ashamed to return to their communities.

Prince Edward's convention marks the decisive point in the deterioration of relations between the Government and the public on the one hand, and the Ras Tafari movement on the other. The anti-social elements so heavily emphasised during those three weeks were perhaps irrevocable. During the latter part of 1958 two cases occurred at Trench Town, Kingston in which Ras Tafari men were said to have thrown children into the fire as sacrifices.

The cult of criminality and violence increased steadily within the movement. Its moderate wing lost control, and a fair number of E.W.F. Locals became dormant. The news of Haile Sellassie's land grant spread like a rumour, unverified, irrefutable. The executive of Local 19, who held the letter, did little to publicise the facts. The moderate wing were sharply divided among themselves on doctrinal and personal grounds.

In the early part of 1959 the Rev. Claudius Henry, a Jamaican who had been in America for some years, established the Seventh Emmanuel Brethren, shortly to be followed by the African Reform Church, after a brief and unsuccessful association with the Ethiopian World Federation, the local head of which, Mr. Cecil G. Gordon, published a letter in the "Star" (April-May 1959) disclaiming association with Henry. During the summer of 1959 several thousand cards bearing the following statement were distributed:

Pioneering Israel's scattered Children of African Origin back home to Africa, this year 1959, deadline date Oct. 5th, this new Government is God's Righteous Kingdom of Everlasting Peace on

Earth, "Creation's Second Birth". Holder of this Certificate is requested to visit the Headquarters at 78 Rosalie Ave., off Waltham Park Road, August 1st 1959, for Our Emancipation Jubilee commencing 9 a.m. sharp. Please preserve this Certificate for removal. No passport will be necessary for those returning home to Africa. Bring this Certificate with you on August 1st, for "Identification". We are sincerely, "The Seventh Emmanuel's Brethren" gathering Israel's Scattered Children for removal, with our Leader, God's Appointed and Anointed Prophet, Rev. C. V. Henry, R.B.

Given this 2nd day of March 1959, in the year of the reign of His Imperial Majesty, 1st Emperor of Ethiopia, "God's Elect". Haile Sellassie. King of Kings and Lord of Lords. "Israel's Returned Messiah."

Informants say that about 15,000 tickets were distributed at 1/- each although marked "Free" and that many people sold their possessions and came to Kingston in the expectation that they would proceed to Africa.

On the morning of May 7th 1959 a dispute occurred at the Coronation Market, Spanish Town Road, Kingston, between a bearded Ras Tafari gatekeeper and a non-Ras Tafari market policeman, both employees of the Kingston & St. Andrew Corporation. According to informants, the policeman was quickly assisted by other policemen and the Ras Tafari was severely drubbed in public. According to the brethren, the market vendors, who knew and were friendly to the beaten man, proceeded to stone his assailants with vegetables and anything they could lay hands on. In a short time a police van arrived with men. The vendors, say the Ras Tafari, proceeded to batter the police and set the van on fire. A Fire Brigade lorry then turned up and this in turn was set alight. More police arrived and there was a general melee at the end of which the police were fully in control and are said to have proceeded to the Back o' Wall area where many Ras Tafari live and there they wreaked vengeance. Some brethren had their houses broken up, about 57 were arrested, a fair number of beatings are alleged to have taken place, and many Locksmen were forcibly shaved. According to the Ras Tafari brethren, the original riot at the Coronation Market occurred between the police and the public there, and did not involve them. The judicial sentences passed on apprehended Ras Tafari merely confirmed the Leftist interpretation that this Government was a 'Fascist' agent of imperialist capital. Dr. Fidel Castro's successes in Cuba gained local significance. The general public who are quite out of sympathy with the Ras Tafari seem to have ranged themselves on the side of Government and the police.

On July 28th 1959 the fourth Jamaican General Election was held. This was the fourth time that the P.N.P. and the J.L.P. confronted one another. On their last meeting at the Federal Elections of March 1958, the J.L.P. won handsomely, and it was therefore of special importance to the People's National Party that they should recover the lost ground in July 1959. Many Ras Tafari brethren refused to take part in this election, whether registered as voters or not. They held the view that neither party represented them, and both would only treat them harshly. One Ras Tafari man from Back o' Wall told us that

on Election Day a mob of local residents who supported the People's National Party attacked his house and broke it up. He showed us the site where the house had stood. He said he complained to a policeman, who replied that there was nothing that he could do, perhaps because squatters have no rights on this land, and may be legally unable to claim compensation for damage to their property. Such incidents were interpreted by the Ras Tafari brethren as further proof of collusion between the P.N.P. and the Police, denial of human rights, and 'Fascist' administration.

Some Ras Tafari brethren, in explaining their lack of confidence in the political parties, repeat the story that agents of the People's National Party at this election promised spokesmen of the Ras Tafari movement repatriation to Africa if the latter voted for the People's National Party and this Party was returned to power. P.N.P. spokesmen assert that this story is a complete fabrication, but, as we have remarked before, beliefs are equally effective whether they are based on fact or not. Clearly such allegations are politically profitable to those persons interested in discrediting the People's National Party, and to others who are interested in discrediting both parties, and the two-party system with them. One aspect of the record of the Ras Tafari movement as set out here is a record of disturbances, cumulatively increasing. It is perfectly clear that this increase will continue until some positive action is taken to meet their reasonable demands. From Howell's day to Prince Edward's Convention and from the latter to the African Reform Church movement and the events of June 1960 are quite small steps. It would be a pity if either Party failed in its duty to the Jamaican people and the Ras Tafari brethren at this time. It would also be disastrous.

If the declared Ras Tafari brethren in Kingston are estimated at between ten and fifteen thousands, the undeclared but closely integrated sympathisers may be an equal number, and the sum of these two may be somewhat less than the numbers of people in Kingston who might take the side of the Ras Tafari brethren if circumstances seemed favourable. Since many Ras Tafari brethren are beardless, and live dispersed through the City, the actual strength of the movement is hard to estimate, while its penetration among the disaffected urban lower class is correspondingly easy. The only effective opposition in this stratum may come from well-paid Unionised labour, for whom the present arrangements may seem satisfactory; but in our opinion this section has doubtful loyalty to either Party or to the present social and political system.

CHAPTER IV

THE DOCTRINES OF THE MOVEMENT

From the history which has been presented in the preceding chapter, the reader may readily deduce that Rastafari brethren are a very heterogeneous group. Rastafarians hold in common only two beliefs: that Ras Tafari is the living God, and that salvation can come to black men only through repatriation to Africa. On all other matters the opinions of the brethren vary as widely as the opinions of the rest of the population. Some wear beards, others do not; and only a small minority wear the locks. Some are men of the highest moral fibre, while at the other extreme are men of crime and violence. Some smoke ganja; others abhor it. Some are excellent workmen, while others avoid work. In all matters except two, the divinity of Ras Tafari and the necessity of repatriation, Ras Tafarians are a random group.

They are also very disorganised, and lacking in leadership. Probably the great majority are not attached to any of the many organisations which give themselves names and lists of officers. There is no leader or group of leaders who can speak for the movement as a whole or define its doctrines.

The following description of attitudes to various matters must therefore essentially take the form of "some say this, others say that". This in itself may help to clarify public misconceptions.

The Divinity of Ras Tafari

All brethren agree that the Emperor Haile Sellassie is the Living God, the Returned Messiah and the Representative of God the Father. The name 'Sellassie' means 'Power of the Trinity'; Ras was the Emperor's title before his coronation in 1930; Tafari is a personal name of the Emperor Haile Sellassie before his coronation. Many brethren nowadays refer to the Emperor only as Haile Sellassie, arguing that after his elevation to the throne, the use of his former title would be incorrect. Proverbs 22, Isaiah 43 and John 16 ("For I am in the Father and the Father is in Me") shows that Ras Tafari is the Living God, Old Alpha, the Lion of Judah — invincible and visible, the Redeemer of Israel, who are the black race. A full-length photograph in the *Illustrated London News* of Saturday 11th January 1936 shows the Emperor standing with his right foot on an unexploded Italian bomb. This illustrated his invincibility. Photographs of the Emperor defending Ethiopia against the Italians, and such publications as "*The March of Black Men — Ethiopia Leads*", support his role as the champion of the black race.

Beyond this point, the religious beliefs of Ras Tafarians brethren diverge widely. An account of one extreme is given in the Appendix to this Report.

Black Nationalism

All Ras Tafari brethren agree that the black man is exploited in the Western world, and must get back to Africa. For some this is a secular doctrine, derived from the history of the Negro during slavery and since. For others it is a religious doctrine, enshrining the proposition that the black man is the chosen race of God. This extreme view is expounded in the Appendix.

The secular view is rooted both in history and in the contemporary social structure of Jamaica. Everybody recognises that Negroes were exploited during slavery. Ras Tafari brethren assert that Negroes are still exploited.

When challenged, they point to the contemporary situation, where economic and racial lines run close together. Eighty per cent of Jamaica's population is black, about two per cent is white, and most of the rest is coloured. By and large, the economic system is a pyramid with whites at the top, coloureds in the middle, and blacks at the bottom. Nobody can pretend that in Jamaica today the average black child, brown child, and white child have equal chances at birth.

The slums of Kingston are an excellent breeding ground for black nationalism. Unemployment is endemic and widespread in Kingston, and many persons who actively seek employment have for years had only occasional casual labour. The areas where many Ras Tafari brethren live have no water, light, sewage disposal or collection of rubbish. It is not strange that those who live in these conditions would like to emigrate.

Marcus Garvey taught that the black man would find his soul only by turning his back on white civilisation, and returning to Africa, to live under black government. All Ras Tafari brethren believe this to be true.

Beards and Locks

The most obvious source of division and dispute among the brethren is the treatment of the hair. The brethren fall into three categories: the Locksmen, whose hair is matted and plaited and never cut, neither their beards; the Beardmen, who wear their hair and beards but may trim them occasionally and do not plait the hair, but keep it clean. Both these groups wear moustaches. Thirdly there is the Baldhead or 'clean-faced' man who is not obviously distinguishable from the ordinary Jamaican except by some article such as the yellow, green and red pompom or scarf. Cleanfaced men are mostly employed. Many employed men who have not overtly declared themselves to be brethren are deeply sympathetic to or interested in their doctrines and movement, and some of these wear beards. Not all beardmen in Kingston are Ras Tafari brethren; many criminals have adopted the beard as a form of disguise and because it enables them to penetrate Ras Tafari groups in the slums and facilitates access to ganja and information; many who profess the doctrine in any of its forms may do so for ulterior motives. The Ras Tafari brethren are themselves very conscious of this.

The dispute about beards and hair centres on the interpretation of Scripture and of the brethren's role in contemporary Jamaica. Clean-faced men argue that beards, in view of current Jamaican attitudes which are hostile to the Ras Tafari, deprive people of employment. We have met many cases in which persons were refused work because of their beards; and others in which employed persons who had adopted the doctrine and begun to grow the beard as a symbol of their creed, soon lost employment. Beardmen are divided among themselves, some, who have fairly regular jobs and carry themselves with dignity, hold that the beard and long hair are enjoined on brethren but should be kept neat and clean as the Emperor keeps his beard and hair. Others who lack employment blame their condition on the Babylonian conspiracy, holding Government as well as the public responsible, and take pride in the beard as the precept or cross which they bear for their religion among the heathen. It is a short step from this position to that adopted by the Locksmen, whose vows are Nazarite. Locksmen point with pride to photographs of East African tribesmen whose coiffure is almost identical with their own. They regard themselves as the most elect and purest adherents to the doctrine, the persons who have suffered most for their religion and race, and the vanguard, the Ethiopian warriors. Many beardmen and almost all clean-faced or baldhead men take a sharply different view. To these people the Locksmen have discredited the Ras Tafari movement, and are bringing it into further disrepute through their associations with ganja, crime and verbal violence. The division here is basically between persons with some commitment to the standards by which self-respect and self-improvement are measured in Jamaican society, and those whose commitment is to standards which are totally alien. For the Locksmen do have their own standards, and these are as genuine as any others. To them, racial pride and religious observance together require a physical appearance almost identical with that of some East African tribes. Similarly, ganja is an article of use in East Africa and is regarded as sanctified by God. The criminality of which they are accused seems to Locksmen to be simply a Babylonian lie. The violence which some of them emphasise pales by comparison with passages from Ezekiel, Isaiah, Revelations and the like, the Bible of Babylon.

Ganja

Some brethren will have nothing to do with ganja, while others accord it religious significance. It is identified by its users with the herb of Genesis 8, Psalm 18, and Revelations 22.

Those who smoke ganja say that it has therapeutic effects, and keeps away illness. They deny that it is harmful. To those who assert that ganja smoking makes some men violent, they reply that so also does drinking rum and if it is not illegal to drink rum, why is it illegal to smoke ganja?

One difference between rum and ganja, which the brethren do not recognise, is that while an overdose of rum incapacitates, an overdose of ganja does not. Thus, when a man predisposed to violence drinks too much rum, he

ceases to be dangerous. But such a man, on smoking ganja, becomes more dangerous the more he smokes.

Those of the brethren who object to ganja complain that it is used by influential people merely for exploitation. They assert that many policemen sell ganja, and that the police could stop the sale of ganja if they wanted to do so. In every country of the world there are some corrupt policemen who protect the trade in narcotics; but there is no evidence that Jamaica's policemen are more deeply involved than policemen in other countries.

Violence

The team had no contact with the followers of the Rev. Claudius Henry, who are, in any case, a small minority of the Kingston Brethren.

The great majority of Ras Tafari brethren are peaceful citizens who do not believe in violence. Nevertheless, since the movement is heterogeneous and includes all types, its members range from complete pacifists at one end to criminals, the mentally deranged and revolutionaries at the other end.

The language of the movement is violent. This is because it is the language of the Bible, and especially of the Old Testament. It is apocalyptic language, in which sinners are consumed with fire, sheep are separated from goats, oppressors are smitten and kings and empires are overthrown. All Christians use this violent language, in their religious services and elsewhere. The use of such language does not mean that they are ready to fight in the streets. It does, on the other hand, mean that the concepts of revolution are neither frightening nor unfamiliar.

Recent events have increased the acceptability of revolutionary ideas. We have already shown that relations between Ras Tafari brethren and the police have deteriorated sharply over the last few years. They have deteriorated even more sharply in the last four months, in the course of which the police have carried out extensive raids, made numerous arrests, and, in the heat of the moment, have indulged in many arbitrary acts against Ras Tafarians. The brethren have a strong sense of persecution, which draws them together. In this mood an explosion of violence is quite feasible.

We have no evidence that Ras Tafarians, as a group, are being manipulated by non-Ras Tafarians with violent beliefs, such as Communists. Ras Tafari doctrine is radical in the broad sense that it is against the oppression of black men, much of which derives from the existing economic structure. But it has no links with Marxism, either of analysis or of prognosis. The movement has been infiltrated by a number of criminals, but these people are essentially individualists, and have little ideological influence.

For Jamaican leftists the violent part of the Ras Tafari spectrum is a gift; capitalist, bourgeoisie and proletariat can be directly translated into white, brown and black. Revolution becomes Redemption with Repatriation as the

issue provoking bloodshed. The Marxist vanguard wears a Niyabingi cloak. Ras Tafari brethren themselves often speak of the wolf in sheep's clothing among them. The Leftist doctrine attracts the young unemployed and those with schooling, as well as the disinherited. In our survey we encountered certain groups among which the Marxist interpretation and terminology predominated over the racial-religious. Events in Cuba, China, Egypt and elsewhere endow the Marxist analysis with a pragmatic validity and power. In so far as this political philosophy employs the ideology of Ras Tafari racism, its spread throughout the bulk of the population is assured unless Government takes positive steps to meet the legitimate needs of the lower classes, including the Ras Tafari group. The choice before Jamaica is that between social reform which is planned, peaceful and rapid on the one hand, or changes of a different sort. It is certain that Jamaican society cannot continue in its present form. Since economic development presumes social stability, this means that any successful development depends on an intelligent programme of social reform. The recent spread of Ras Tafari doctrines among educated middle class youth is largely due to the appeals of ganja and Marxism, but this spread will surely continue so long as Jamaican society fails to provide the young with significant ideals of social justice for which to strive, and opportunities for their achievement.

Work

The attitudes of Ras Tafari brethren to work do not differ from those of the rest of the population. At one extreme, the movement includes some excellent workmen, highly skilled and industrious. At the other extreme are not a few who avoid work. In the middle are the great majority of average disposition.

Though the attitudes of Ras Tafarians are similar, the brethren differ from the rest of the population in that a much larger proportion are unemployed; not because Ras Tafarians are difficult to employ, but because it is the unemployed who are most easily attracted to the movement.

Much of the psychology of the brethren is the psychology of the unemployed in any part of the world, and is similar in its essentials to that of the unemployed working class in Europe or in the United States during the nineteen thirties. There is the same sense of shiftlessness and of despair. In the absence of organised relief, many brethren live on the charity of their fellows. And many have become so used to not finding work that they have ceased to look for it.

The movement is rooted in unemployment. If the supply of jobs in Kingston were to catch up with the demand for jobs, a hard core of religious belief would remain, but the movement would cease to have mass significance. This is well recognised by those Ras Tafari extremists who say that they do not want the Government to take any special measures to improve the economic lot of Ras Tafari brethren.

Conclusion

The general public believes in a stereotype Ras Tafari, who wears a beard, avoids work, steals, smokes ganja, and is liable to sudden violence. This type exists, but it is a minority. The real danger is that if all Ras Tafarians are treated as if they are like this, more and more will become extremists.

What strikes the investigator, on the contrary, is how deeply religious the brethren are. Our meetings with them began and ended with the recitation of psalms and the singing of hymns, and were punctuated by frequent interludes of religious observance. A movement which is so deeply religious need not become a menace to society.

CHAPTER V

THE MOVEMENT'S CURRENT ORGANISATION

Our survey has revealed several lines of division among the Ras Tafari brethren; those who belong to Locals of the Ethiopian World Federation Inc., and those who do not; those who grow their beards and long hair, those who also plait their locks, and those who do neither; those who have adopted the Niyabingi ethos and those who have not; those totally alienated from Jamaican society, and those who are not; those with a definite Marxist framework of ideas, and those without. There are also important divisions between rural and urban brethren, between the young and the old, between those who regard a firm social organisation as a necessary instrument for the achievement of their aims, and those who reject this idea totally; between the unemployed and the employed brethren; between those who are addicted to ganja and those opposed to it; between those for whom the Emperor has special importance as a spiritual force, and those who conceive of him in racial-political terms primarily.

A movement with this complex composition and heterogeneity of elements cannot possibly have a simple constitution. Its sheer complexity makes manipulation by trouble-makers exceedingly easy. Those interested in the ganja traffic, whether at home or abroad, find a serviceable instrument in the Ras Tafari brethren; those interested in provoking a revolution in Jamaica, whether on Marxist or racist grounds, can find a serviceable instrument in the Ras Tafari movement; those merely interested in defrauding people and pursuing personal gain find a ready market in the Ras Tafari movement. It is perfectly clear that all these four types of manipulators are active among the brethren. Only their mutual competition has prevented a major upheaval so far. How long this will continue remains to be seen.

It is important to recognise that probably most of the declared Ras Tafari brethren are not affiliated to organisations of any sort. They may collect in little informal bodies, but these lack a hierarchic structure, rules of procedure, aims, books and the like. Generally such informal groups serve as ganja-smoking clubs and provide their members with religious and social companionship. Some groups of this sort observed by us have a violent undercurrent to them, and are sited in the most abject slums. Typically, their members are Locksmen, Niyabingi is a password, and almost all are unemployed.

Many Locksmen live in small overcrowded shelters with their women or kin; some, lacking women and kin, live together. Often a 'yard' containing four or five separate structures is entirely filled by the men of Locks, or by other Ras Tafari. However, Ras Tafari brethren seem to be just as keen as anyone else to live separately with their own families in their own homes. It

is commonly believed that all Ras Tafari brethren live in 'camps'. We have encountered several such camps, but doubt whether the members really live there; Locksmen or other brethren who go to camp often have some place of abode elsewhere. Many brethren in fact have two or more such abodes, in one of which they conduct their business with other brethren. When in camp, Locksmen have nothing to do with women and cook for themselves. (Leviticus 11) Some cliques or clusters of Locksmen give their little assemblies a group name, others do not; and named informal groups split, disperse or otherwise change as circumstances require.

There are many brethren living in rented quarters by themselves in different parts of the city. Occasionally one finds a family, some members of which are Ras Tafari living in a concrete bungalow. More commonly when young men show Ras Tafari behaviours, their parents react sharply and the young man leaves home in disgrace, fulfilling the prophecy that the faithful will suffer and thus becoming further convinced of the truth of the doctrine. The self-fulfilling prophecies implicit in Ras Tafari behaviour are an important element validating the creed for new converts.

In the dense slum areas the prevailing doctrine and ideology is now Ras Tafari; in the equally dense but better built lower-income residential areas such as Jones Town, Rose Town, Admiral Town, Trench and Denham Town, the doctrine is well represented. Many who shout racial slogans or display racial behaviours are not Ras Tafari brethren, but have accepted important elements of the doctrine, especially the racial protest.

The orderly and moderate segment of the Ras Tafari brethren are mainly to be found within the local branches of the Ethiopian World Federation; however, there are certain moderate groups such as the United Ethiopian Body, the Ethiopian Orthodox Coptic Faith, and the United Afro-West Indian Brotherhood, which flourish in full or partial independence. Conversely, some activist units are loosely attached through their leaders or members to the E.W.F. Of the E.W.F. Locals in Kingston, three have bearded Presidents but we have only met Locksmen at two. Of the eight Kingston Locals, three are known to be dormant, and maybe defunct. The failure of the Ethiopian World Federation in Kingston is not entirely due to a failure of leadership, although it is quite true that the leadership has failed to grasp its opportunities to the full, is intensely suspicious of rivalry, and has a limited contact with the mass of the people. Other factors which contribute to the relative failure of the E.W.F. include the deterioration in living conditions among the urban lower class, the growth of the city, the lack of a positive social programme within the E.W.F., and especially its peculiar dependence on the American headquarters. In 1959 there was a Convention at Davis Lane off Upper West Road at which representatives of different urban Locals considered their common problems for three or four daily sittings. Among these problems were the lack of any all-island Executive Committee co-ordinating the activities of the separate Locals, the inability of the Jamaican members of the E.W.F. to select by their own free will delegates to represent them at the successive annual conventions

of the Federation in New York, and their dependence for information about developments at headquarters on the three Jamaican officials of the New York office. The dependent position of Jamaican E.W.F. branches is aggravated by the fact that as far as we know Jamaica may contain more E.W.F. Locals than the U.S.A. Accordingly, some members of this 1959 meeting of the E.W.F. argued strongly in favour of moving the headquarters of the organization from New York to this island. A report published by the Jamaican delegation attending the 20th International Convention, of the E.W.F. in New York says:

“The second important issue was subject to complaints made to the Executive Committee of the E.W.F. about the actions of the Ras Tafari Cults and the self-styled African Reform Church led by the so-called, Rev. C. V. Henry, repairer of the breach, who has brought the name of this Organisation and His Imperial Majesty into disrepute. For information, the E.W.F. is a registered recognised and International Organisation, is fully accepted by His Imperial Majesty Haile Sellassie I. It has no connection whatsoever with people who are not God-fearing, not Law-abiding, dishonest in their intentions, and who have no regard for Ethiopia's Culture or Tradition. The Conventoin named a Committee to go into this very important matter and to see to it that the people in the W.I., especially Jamaica, are not misled by these unscrupulous Artless Godless and self-styled Leaders.” (*The Youth*, December 1959 – Kingston, p. 14).

To the best of our knowledge, this Committee has not yet arrived. Meanwhile, as the organisation established at the Emperor's direction and authorised to mediate between Ethiopia and “the black peoples of the West”, the Ethiopian World Federation both in New York and Jamaica exercises a monopoly of quasi-official contact with Ethiopia. The New York head office is said to employ only three people. If the local E.W.F. is to become vital, it needs energetic recruits with a sense of mission, and it also needs a more democratic administration. Under present arrangements, officials appear to the Jamaican members to be irremovable, and communications of the greatest importance to the enrolled brethren are not sufficiently publicised. The E.W.F. in Jamaica could probably become more effective if it adopted a policy of expansion. A strong Executive Committee on which all urban branches are represented could be set up and empowered to take decisions and courses of action on behalf of the organisation as a whole. A positive appeal could then be made to the public by a series of lectures, street meetings, letters to the Press, brief broadcasts and the like. As enrolment increases, so should finance, and an effective Organising staff could be recruited to push the campaign further afield. Representations to Government, the K.S.A.C. and other bodies could then become effective. The organisation should have confidence in its ability to face such challenges as those presented by the Rev. Henry without appeals to New York.

There is evidence to suggest that a Bishop of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church (formerly the Ethiopian Coptic Church) may visit Jamaica later this year, or some time next year. The local heads of the E.W.F. have received some correspondence on this matter. It is obvious that the organisation should

make the greatest possible effort to secure this visit as soon as possible, and to set about the establishment of a branch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Kingston. Trinidad, which has no Ras Tafari brethren, already has a branch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. The Ras Tafari ideology is inherently egalitarian; but the organisation of the E.W.F. is fairly authoritarian and personal. Those Locals such as 7 and 37 which show the greatest vitality have Bearded-men as Presidents, and a frankly democratic spirit.

All E.W.F. Locals have the following officers: President, Vice-President, Financial Secretary, Recording Secretary, Treasurer, Sergeant-at-Arms, and some have more. With a few other members, these officers form the Executive Committee. Meetings are held twice weekly, often on Mondays and Thursday nights. Simpson's description of these meetings still holds. A local may be registered at Headquarters in New York on payment of \$10 U.S., providing there are 25 enrolled members, each of whom pays an entrance fee of 50 cents or 3/6 together with a weekly subscription of 9d, half of which is to be sent to New York. Those Locals which are flourishing ignore the latter requirement. They either collect levies to assist needy members as required, or if a regular weekly collection is made, this is kept as a reserve fund for the group. However, all locals do contribute to the travelling expenses of the Jamaican officials who attend the annual conventions in New York. Independent groups such as the United Ethiopian Body reject the idea of entering this Federation on the ground that they can't pay taxes to New York, nor be subject to its rules. Some other independent bodies of an activist type, notably the United Rases Organ, may have failed to get recognition as E.W.F. Locals. The rather exclusive attitude of many E.W.F. Leaders is not consistent with the doctrine of black racial supremacy and mass repatriation. The E.W.F. has tended to regard itself as an elect or elite, and so has lost mass support. If it is to recover this, it has to campaign vigorously for those important ideas represented by its constitution.

Ras Tafari brethren, especially the men of locks, are surprisingly well-informed about events in Jamaica and elsewhere. Almost every group keeps a scrap-book, in which their correspondence is entered, together with a host of newspaper clippings relevant to their interests. Many brethren listen to the news on their own radios. All read the local newspapers with care and intelligence. Little escapes their notice. In addition, they receive magazines such as the *Ethiopian Observer*, a very creditable journal edited in Addis Ababa and published in Britain, together with *African Opinion*, an American Negro racist bi-monthly to which some local brethren occasionally contribute. Marxist journals such as the *Worker's World* are also available, and one brother informed us casually that he received prohibited Russian and Chinese literature. Nothing that proceeds in Cuba or Africa escapes the attention of the Ras Tafari intelligentsia. Those who also belong to the People's Freedom Movement receive its periodical newsletter interpreting local conditions. One local unit which calls itself the United African Nationalist Movement bears the same name as a New York Negro organisation with headquarters at the Hotel Theresa, New York City.

Organisationally, the brethren may be subdivided into members of the E.W.F. and others. Operationally, the distinction between Beardsmen, Clean-faced or Baldhead men and Locksmen, few of whom have much to do with the E.W.F., provides a more effective basis for co-ordinating the differing elements and views within the movement at this stage. Rural units, whether branches of the E.W.F. or unaffiliated brethren, have not formed part of this survey. It appears that whereas the Rev. Henry's activities have had a profoundly disturbing effect on the urban Ras Tafari brethren, most of these remained aloof, and that the African Reform Church drew the bulk of its following from the rural areas. At Old Harbour there is a small defiant group known as the Blood and Thunder Ras Tafari Brethren, from whom even the others keep away. At Montego Bay another group of similar size is said to worship Ibn Saud as God, a patent heresy.

CHAPTER VI

WHAT RAS TAFARI BRETHREN WANT

The UCWI was invited by Ras Tafari Brethren to tell the public what the movement stands for, how it is organised, and what the brethren want. As we have shown, the movement is not homogenous, and most of its members recognise no single leader or group of leaders. Nevertheless, certain common desires can be formulated.

All the brethren want to be repatriated to Ethiopia. There is no agreement, however, on what should happen in the meantime. The majority recognise that they have to live, and would welcome efforts to provide employment, housing, water and other amenities. There is, however, a very vocal minority which regards any effort to help Ras Tafari brethren in these ways as a plot to keep them in Jamaica. They profess themselves to be violently opposed to any measures which might have the effect of rehabilitation.

At a meeting held on July 15th between the UCWI team, the Principal and a large number of brethren, it was agreed that the following is a fair statement of what Ras Tafari brethren want. In commenting seriatim, we also include our own recommendations.

1. The Ras Tafari brethren all want repatriation.
2. All the brethren want local recognition and freedom of movement and speech, which are essential human rights.
3. All want an end of 'persecution' by Government and the police.
4. Some brethren want improved material, social and economic conditions until repatriation.
5. Some brethren want educational provisions, including adult education and technical training. Many brethren are skilled men seeking employment.
6. Some brethren have suggested that a special fund be set up, to be known as the **Ras Tafari Rehabilitation Fund**.
7. Others have asked for a radio programme to tell Jamaica about their doctrine; some for Press facilities.

These goals and needs are specific and operational. There is nothing inherently impossible about them. The most important are also the most difficult and the most generally wanted. Of these, repatriation, that is, return to Africa, is undoubtedly the most passionately held and widespread demand of the Ras Tafari brethren.

Repatriation

We are strongly of the opinion that the Government of Jamaica should take the initiative in arranging for the emigration to Africa and settlement therein of Jamaicans who wish to go there. Several reasons lead to this conclusion.

- (1) Every citizen has a right to emigrate if he so desires, and to change his nationality if he so desires.
- (2) While many Ras Tafari brethren would stay in Jamaica if they found work and good social conditions, a large number have strong religious and emotional ties with Africa, which cannot be destroyed.
- (3) Jamaica is over-populated, and cannot provide work for all its citizens. Every effort should be made to facilitate emigration.
- (4) Jamaica now facilitates the settlement of emigrants in England; from a racial point of view emigration to Africa seems more appropriate.
- (5) Substantial emigration to Africa will not be possible unless the Jamaica Government takes certain initiatives.

The first step is to find out which African countries are prepared to receive Jamaicans. There is evidence that the Emperor of Ethiopia has granted a few hundred acres of land on a trial basis for settlement of "Black People of the West". His willingness to admit Jamaicans to Ethiopia should be formally explored. Some Ras Tafari brethren fix their eyes exclusively on Ethiopia. Others mean by "Ethiopia" the continent of Africa, and would be glad to emigrate to any African country.

The first step is therefore to send an official mission to visit several countries of Africa, and seek permission for Jamaican immigration. Such a mission should be led by a prominent Jamaican, preferably not identified with one of the political parties. It should include civil servants, and prominent Ras Tafari brethren. Since the movement has no universally accepted leaders, this presents rather a difficulty. The various groups will be able to nominate people to discuss with the government the necessary preparations, and also to go on the mission. However, if the mission fails, the brethren will probably repudiate their representatives. Failure of the mission would not prove to the brethren that repatriation is a mirage. This should not be used as an excuse for failing to take the initiative. Emigration is necessary, and the government has a duty to discover whether it is possible, and to exploit every possibility.

If any African Government agrees to permit immigration it will probably impose tests on the immigrants. Possible such tests are literacy, artisan skills, and economic viability. Many Ras Tafarians could not pass such tests without preparation and help. They would have to use opportunities provided for learning to read, or for acquiring technical skills.

Settlement of migrants costs a great deal of money, which is required for opening up land, for roads, houses, water supplies, and industrial capital.

Even if a Government is willing to accept Jamaican immigrants, it may not be willing or able to spend the large sums required for settling them.

Opportunities for emigration should not be confined to Ras Tafari brethren. Many other Jamaicans, who do not accept the divinity of the Emperor of Ethiopia, would gladly seize an opportunity to emigrate to Africa. Indeed, since so many Ras Tafarians have had long spells of unemployment, Ras Tafarians in general may find it more difficult to pass the tests which the African Governments may impose than would other Jamaicans.

The immediate step is for the Government to invite a small group of representatives of the movement to discuss practical moves.

Recognition

The Ras Tafari cult is unique, but it is not seditious. Its adherents have, and should continue to have freedom to preach it. Their demand for freedom of speech and freedom of movement is wholly justifiable.

The public should cease to believe that all Ras Tafari brethren conform to a stereotype.

Those Ras Tafarians who advertise themselves by wearing beards or the dreadlocks are shunned by the general public. They have difficulty in obtaining work. In every part of the world, including Africa, people who insist on looking different from their fellow men tend to be persecuted by their fellow men. This is not a justification for persecution. The public should learn to recognise that religious people have a right to wear their hair long if they wish to do so.

Some teachers cut the hair of Ras Tafari children, so the parents react by keeping the children away from school. Some of these parents are asking for special schools for their children. There is a much simpler remedy: the Minister of Education should prohibit teachers from cutting the hair of children without their parents' permission.

The Police

The police and the Ras Tafari are in a state of exasperation with each other, which can lead to no good.

The police have had to cope with a violent section of the movement, and have had to conduct security operations designed to discover the limits of violent intention. Such operations are seldom gentle. Add to this the complications of ganja hunting, plus the fact that policemen share the public's prejudice against men who wear their hair long, and it is not surprising that there have been many cases of arbitrary action by policemen against innocent people.

This has had the unfortunate result of wasting a valuable opportunity of enlisting Ras Tafari support against violence. Many Ras Tafari brethren were shocked by stories of stocks of arms, of foreign mercenaries, and of murder of Ras Tafari, and so the moderates, who are the great majority, might have been enlisted in stamping out violence. Instead, by treating all Ras Tafari brethren alike as outcasts, the public and the police have stimulated their sense of common grievance, and may have strengthened rather than weakened the ideological respect for violence.

The police have to keep in touch with potentially violent sections of the movement. Apart from this, they should leave innocent Ras Tafari brethren alone; stop cutting off their hair, stop moving them on, stop arresting them on minor pretexts, and stop beating them up. Violence breeds violence.

As for ganja, all experience shows that this trade cannot be stopped by trying to catch the individual smoker. Police efforts should concentrate on finding out who are the big traders who are making money out of ganja. Also, it should be fairly easy to spot the larger plots of ganja cultivation from a helicopter.

Social Conditions

Any self-respecting Jamaican who passes through such slum areas as the Foreshore Road, Back o' Wall, Davis Lane or the like cannot but be ashamed.

Several of these slums result from squatting on private land. No water is available. Pit latrines are illegal in Kingston; human waste is deposited between the shacks. K.S.A.C. carts will not enter upon private land to collect rubbish, so that too is deposited between the shacks. If these people were not squatting, the landlord would be obliged to provide water and sewage disposal.

The trouble is that squatting is tolerated, but not recognised. It is tolerated because the Government is not building sufficient low-rent houses to eliminate squatting. It is not recognised because to recognise it might involve buying the land from landlords in areas where the market value of land is counted in thousands of pounds per acre. And because it is not recognised, the squatters get no amenities.

This nettle must be grasped. The building of low rent houses should be accelerated. At the same time, there is little prospect that houses will be built fast enough to absorb the squatters — having regard to the rate at which Kingston's population is growing. The owners should face up to the fact that they have lost their land. Government, in turn, should pay them some compensation, based on the price paid by an unwilling buyer to an unwilling seller, and should forthwith arrange for water, light, toilet facilities and sewage collection on these settlements.

Training

West Kingston as a whole is sadly in need of civic centres, which could serve several functions, such as technical classes, youth clubs, child clinics, or book distribution points. Playing fields are also sadly needed. If such centres are established under suitable Wardens skilled in this work, provision should be made for Ras Tafari brethren to use these facilities to the full, along with other citizens. Special efforts should be made to give young people of whatever persuasion technical skills, and to raise standards of literacy and general education. If government provided sufficient funds, the UCWI might open a University Settlement in West Kingston.

The Methodist Church has been active, but all the churches could usefully do more social work in West Kingston. The Government should invite the Ethiopian Orthodox Coptic Church to establish a branch in West Kingston.

Economic Assistance

The basic need of Ras Tafari brethren, as of most of the people of Kingston, is regular employment. Given regular employment, the brethren could afford better housing and other social amenities, and their feeling of alienation would greatly diminish.

Unfortunately, the rate of capital investment in Jamaica is not adequate to provide employment for all at the current level of wages. One must therefore consider how the people could help themselves by self-employment.

Some Ras Tafari brethren believe that, given financial aid, they could establish cooperative workshops where they could produce commodities for sale to each other, with a surplus for sale to the general public. There are many skilled brethren who could work within this framework. The idea should be discussed, and an initial experiment made.

Similarly, some Ras Tafari brethren are prepared to build themselves houses, on the cooperative self-help plan, which has proved successful in Puerto Rico, Trinidad, Surinam and elsewhere. They should be given the chance to do so.

Communications

Some Ras Tafari brethren are seeking the opportunity to make their opinions known to the general public by press and radio. They should be given this opportunity.

Reciprocally, the press and radio should address themselves to the Ras Tafari brethren from time to time, in discussion of topics interesting to the brethren.

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

In the preceding chapters we have made the following recommendations.

(1) The Government of Jamaica should send a mission to African countries to arrange for immigration of Jamaicans. Representatives of Ras Tafari brethren should be included in the mission.

(2) Preparations for the mission should be discussed immediately with representatives of the Ras Tafari brethren.

(3) The general public should recognise that the great majority of Ras Tafari brethren are peaceful citizens, willing to do an honest day's work.

(4) The police should complete their security enquiries rapidly, and cease to persecute peaceful Ras Tafari brethren.

(5) The building of low-rent houses should be accelerated, and provision made for self-help cooperative building.

(6) Government should acquire the principal areas where squatting is now taking place, and arrange for water, light, sewerage disposal and collection of rubbish.

(7) Civic centres should be built with facilities for technical classes, youth clubs, child clinics, etc. The churches and the U.C.W.I. should collaborate.

(8) The Ethiopian Orthodox Coptic Church should be invited to establish a branch in West Kingston.

(9) Ras Tafari brethren should be assisted to establish cooperative workshops.

(10) Press and radio facilities should be accorded to leading members of the movement.

APPENDIX I

ETHIOPIAN WORLD FEDERATION, Inc.

151 Lenox Avenue
New York 27, N.Y.

September 24, 1955

Executive Committee
Local #31
Ethiopian World Federation, Inc.
71 North Street,
Kingston, Jamaica, B.W.I.

Dear Mr. President, Members of the Executive Committee

Greetings:

I was instructed by the Executive Council to forward to you, for your guidance, the following information relative to the Land Grant in Ethiopia.

1. Five hundred acres of very fertile and rich land has been given, through the Ethiopian World Federation, Inc., to the Black People of the West, who aided Ethiopia during her period of distress.
2. This land is the personal property of H.I. Majesty Emperor Haile Sellassie I. The land is given on a trial basis, the way it is utilised will be the touchstone for additional grants.
3. At present the Ethiopian Government is not prepared for mass migration, for this reason the people who are willing and able to go there to settle on the land must be of the pioneer calibre, they must be prepared to forego many of the things to which they are now accustomed.
4. These people must go in groups and have the co-operative spirit of — all for one and one for all — operating in this manner they can be no failure; this is said because of our experience with several members who are now in Ethiopia trying to develop the land but operating on an individual basis, which is not to the satisfaction of all concerned, however as additional members go we urge a change in this individual method.
5. Carpenters, plumbers, masons, electricians and other skilled persons should be among these groups, to prepare places for the people to live. People who are going to settle on the land should have a knowledge of farming, Doctors, Teachers, nurses and other professional people should look into the possibilities of going to Ethiopia to help in the public health and education of our brothers and sisters there and in turn learn from them many things which we need to know.

6. Since the Ethiopian World Federation, Inc, at the present time are not in a position to assume the financial burden of members who are desirous of going to Ethiopia to settle on the Land Grant, we urge that the local start a fund-raising campaign for the purpose of aiding those members who meet the qualifications required.

Be assured that in the very near future a more positive program for the Land project will be in motion.

Fraternally yours,

George A. Bryan

Executive Secretary

Robert L. Johnson

International President

Maymie Richardson

International Organizer

Ethiopian World Federation, Inc.

APPENDIX II

Ethiopian Orthodox Church Patriarchate

P.O.B. 1178,
Addis Ababa,
23 May, 1960.

Mr. C. Gordon E. L. Brooks,
Success Club,
63 Wildman Street,
Kingston,
Jamaica, W.I.

Dear Mr. Gordon,

We have received your petition and the lists of persons willing to accept the faith of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.

The first step you have to take in this matter is to form an organisation of the church with validly elected office-bearers to run it. After that you may please make a report to us of your aims and objectives.

We are fully sympathetic towards the ideals and aspirations of your people, and we may inform you that His Holiness the Patriarch with the Holy Synod will take the necessary steps in the matter of establishing the ancient Apostolic Church there.

In the meanwhile, we shall be glad to receive more information about the conditions and situation there.

Yours in our Lord,

Abba Theophilos

Lisane Work Woubou
1 West 125th St. New York 27, N.Y.
June 13, 1960

Mr. Cecil G. Gordon,
President of the Ethiopian
World Federation, Inc. in Jamaica
6 Gurling Street, Kingston 12
Jamaica B.W.I.

Dear Mr. Gordon,

I received your letter of 7.6.1960 and would like to thank you very much indeed. From the time that I got your first letter I and Fr. Meshesha have

sent a letter to Ethiopia to let us know if we can establish a branch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Jamaica and we are waiting for an answer. We learn also from your letter that you have requested the Church in Ethiopia to send you an Ethiopian priest to establish a branch of our Church and we are very glad to hear that. I hope the Church will very soon send you a priest from Ethiopia. I am planning also to visit Jamaica in September which will be perhaps an interesting visit for myself and my friends in Jamaica.

It will be wise if you Mr. Gordon, will get many members for a new start of the Church and School there, where we shall educate our young people of Jamaica and send them to the University of Addis Ababa—Ethiopia for a higher special education.

Hoping and wishing you all the best I remain

Yours,

Lisane Work Woubou

APPENDIX III

NIYABINGI MEN

The Niyabingi section of the movement seems to have originated in Jamaica as a result of the publication of the following article in the Jamaica Times on December 7th, 1935.

This article, which appeared shortly after the invasion of Ethiopia by Italy, does not carry conviction. Its alleged facts are most probably inventions by the Italian propaganda machine, designed to discredit the Emperor. However, its statements were accepted at face value by some Ras Tafari brethren, who thereupon constituted themselves members of the "Niyabingi Order", and preached violence against whites.

The text of the article follows:

"Today it is a "black peril" which darkens the European horizon and which has eclipsed the yellow menace in the minds of the public. Up from the depths of the jungle and out of the hearts of modern cities, from all parts of the African Continent and from countries where coloured people live, the blacks are flocking to the standard of an organisation which dwarfs all similar federations. Hitherto, diverse religious beliefs coupled with the stupidity of primitive peoples prevented such an amalgamation. But today it is a fact! The blacks are welded into an ominous secret league, most remarkable of which is that its existence is scarcely known.

Nya-Binghil

The words mean "Death to the Whites" or "Death to the Europeans." This is the name of this secret society. It sprang to life in the Belgian Congo. Angered by the penetration of white people into their territories, King Mocambo the Second and his nephew formed a dual alliance and swore bloody revenge on the intruders. At the time of its inauguration in 1923 it was insignificant, but since then it has become a menace to Europe.

Although the news of the alliance flew like wild-fire across the continent and despite alarming telegrams from colonial officials in European colonies to their home governments, no one in Europe really took the matter seriously except the French and Belgian governments. But today all the European powers are decidedly uneasy. It is an incontestable fact that this movement of the coloured races against Europeans is a well organised one. It has vast stores of gold at its disposal. All the soldiers, serving today under the banners of European powers are members.

When one considers that the whites number one to two hundred blacks, the danger is obvious.

Conscious of Strength

The blacks know now that their weakness has lain in a lack of cohesion which the whites, through superior knowledge and clever colonizing methods, took advantage of. But at the present time they are conscious of their strength. They have united under the leadership of Islam focussed in the semi-independent negro states of Abyssinia, Egypt, and Liberia. Dissatisfaction and hatred for the white immigrant are fermenting in all European colonies, even in the least significant African tribe.

Nevertheless there is an insurmountable obstacle to the unification of the conspiring group: the impossibility of immediate mutual understanding among the blacks themselves. All attempts to organise general conferences were suppressed by the colonial governments. Ras Tafari, regent of Abyssinia, who later ascended the throne and is now known as Haile Sellassie, started the ball rolling by allying with Egypt and Liberia in order to facilitate cooperation. The act encouraged unity and expanded the power of the negro union. The Negus (the head of the Negro Races) proposed a Pan-Negro Congress in Europe, to forge plans to check the growing influx of Europeans into Africa, and eventually to drive them out of these parts. The Congress was supposed to be for the discussion of social problems. European governments, however, guessed its real nature.

The leaders and potentates of colourdom who were to be the delegates to the congress of 1930 had difficulty in securing a meeting-place. The governments of Europe knew that the conference was in reality an assembly of the dangerous Nya-Binghi. Russia was the only country which welcomed the negro representatives.

Widespread

Altogether there were 82 delegates from all countries of the world. Aside from Abyssinia, Egypt and Liberia there were representatives from Nigeria, Sudan, Algeria, Tunis, Morocco, the Azores, Madeira, Tripoli, and the former German colonies especially Togo and Kameroun. 190,000,000 blacks were thus represented. The Congress lasted 14 days. Its deliberations and decisions were kept strictly secret. At its close the leader of this giant Pan-negro organization was announced. The negro, Haile Sellassie was unanimously voted supreme powers in the Nya-Binghi. He accepted the position and swore to make war on the Europeans.

Quoting his own words at the time: "Death to the oppressors of the black races."

The Ku-Klux-Klan, the American Secret organization whose activities are directed against the blacks, was the first to become aware of the power of the Nya-Binghi. Clan leaders in numerous American cities, such as New York and Washington, were smitten with a strange disease. The illness was fatal. They could not determine its mysterious nature. One day Sam O. Wiking, the Assistant Chief of the Ku-Klux-Klan, was found dead in his room at No. 720 on the 26th floor of the Birmingham Hotel. The news spread. Members of the clan fled the country! The Ku-Klux-Klan was beaten! Black hands had poisoned its members! The rest of them would be marked by the Nya-Binghi!

At the Moscow Congress in 1930 the Negus realised that the first step in ridding Africa of Europeans was to get an outlet to the sea. Now Abyssinia is the only negro kingdom which presents any military significance. But to carry out his plan, the Negus needed soldiers and a basis of operation. Haile Sellassie early recognized the need for a complete reorganisation of his administration and of his army. Since his own subjects were incapable of undertaking this work, he hired Swedish, Belgian, Swiss and Dutch experts. It is ironical that white Europeans should be assisting the blacks, in their concerted efforts against the Europeans.

As stated before, Abyssinia is fighting for an outlet to the Red Sea. Upon accomplishing this, the rebellion of the blacks against the European powers with colonies in Africa is inevitable. An Abyssinian war against Italy attended by possible victory for the Abyssinians, would lead to a revolt of the blacks against the white. In such an event, it is more than doubtful whether Europe would have the strength to pit against such a black avalanche.

In the organization of the Nya-Binghi, Haile Sellassie first of all dispatched people to organize the negroes whose countries are annexed or which are under a protectorate, and to get them to recognize Haile Sellassie as their Ruler by Divine Right. They were to weld the various classes into groups. These groups then, were detailed to carry out various duties, such as the provision of food and water during a war. In this department, the weaker of the women and the children were to be recruited. The stronger of the women were to undergo rigid military training, and to see that the warriors are supplied with arms and munitions. The old and decrepit were to look after the children. Everything else was up to the warriors.

European Methods

Nor have the emissaries of the Nya-Binghi been slow to adopt European Methods. They employ agents and provocateurs (agitators) to stir up the blacks against the whites. The various uprisings in the Sudan and French Morocco point to the activities of the Nya-Binghi. The same thing is going on throughout the colonies.

One of the most important items of the Nya-Binghi programme is to win over the colonial troops, so that at a moment's notice, they will turn on their

white officers. Indeed, it would be easy to carry this out in view of the paucity of European soldiery. And they are succeeding. The lesser revolts among the English, Spanish, French and Italian colonial troops are proof of the activity of the Nya-Binghi whose adherents or friends now number 190,000,000 blacks.

Should this black avalanche drag into its train the Yellow races, it would sound the alarm for India and all the other coloured peoples. True, these million of blacks are not skilled in war. But, primitive people mature young. At fourteen they are fit for service and the women think nothing of doing the work of men.

On the other hand, the leaders of the Nya-Binghi are highly educated men. They have studied at European and American high schools and attended military academies. The most exacting instructions are issued to them from the central department, situated in Addis Ababa.

The head of the Nya-Binghi is the Negus, Haile Sellassie. Next to him is Ras Cassa Sebalit, the ambitious general of the Abyssinian troops. His right-hand man is Deggiac Beiene Mered, while the brains of the espionage department is Deggiac Aialen. Ras Cassa and Deggiac Aialen have sent ambassadors to Japan on business for the Negus. They set out on the fourth of August with a Japanese alliance as their undoubted objective. The Negus's programme is worked out to the most minute detail, and in the utmost secrecy.

Haile Sellassie is regarded as a veritable Messiah, a saviour of the coloured people, the Emperor of the Negro Kingdom. Wherever one mentions the word "Negus" the eyes of the black gleam with a mad fanaticism. They worship him as an idol. He is their God. To die for the Negus is to ensure admission to paradise. Bloody sacrifices are offered up to him. The Negus who himself subscribes to European customs, has tried to stamp out such demonstrations but his ambassadors have worked so excellently that he dare not call a halt.

Army of 20,000,000

In carrying out their plans, they plan to starve out the whites, and then destroy them with arms. But above all, though, Abyssinia must have a harbour on the Red Sea, so she has set her heart on winning Somaliland. A high official of the Nya-Binghi, R. W. Cann, Finance Controller, said recently to a black merchant he was approaching for a contribution to the war fund, "The Nya-Binghi must have the means to maintain an army of 20,000,000 men and to finance a ten-year war."

The Nya-Binghi espionage net-work spreads over the whole world. It functions according to modern principles. The president is the well known Congo Negro Sami Amora.

Their agents have carried out other quite important business: the provision of arms and munitions, sometimes openly, sometimes smuggling them in secretly. Chemical and pharmaceutical preparations have been provided, and

technical staffs have been formed, especially in American cities like Washington, St. Louis, Philadelphia and Chicago. Aeroplanes, autos and even railways are arranged for, and — the whites are supplying the weapons which are bound to lead to their own destruction! — ”

By Frederico Philos

Reprinted from **Magazine Digest** by **Jamaica Times**
December 7, 1935, pp. 22-23.

APPENDIX IV

THE CREED OF A RAS TAFARI MAN

We have emphasised throughout this Report that the brethren hold widely divergent views. The account which follows is that which is taught by some deeply religious men, who derive from the Bible well defined views on the role of the Black Man in the divine purpose.

The black race are the true Israelites, the House of David, and the Emperor, the Lion of Judah, descended from King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, is their true head. Those Jews whom Hitler and the Nazis exterminated were merely false Jews of whom the Scripture has said, "Woe unto them that call themselves Israel and they are not." God is black (Jeremiah 8), Haile Sellassie is black, Solomon and Sheba were black, and so are the true Israelites. The white men have worshipped a dead God, and have taught black men to do likewise. The white man's God is really Pope John XXIII, Pope Pius's successor, the head of the Ku-Klux-Klan. The Emperor, who as God controls the world and its future, is head of the Nya-Binghi who are champions of the good in the fight against Babylon (Rev. 19) and its defenders, the Ku-Klux-Klan, who are evil.

The Bible contains the Word of God, but Scripture shows that half of this has not been written save in your hearts. King James I of Britain, a white man, translated the Bible, distorting and confusing its message; but to those who, by virtue of Ras Tafari's divine power, have been given inspiration and prophetic insight, the false passages put in by the white man for his own purposes are easily detected, and accordingly Ras Tafari brethren treat the Bible carefully, using only that part which they regard as the true Word of God. (Psalms 18, 21, 29, 48, 87, 137; Genesis 18; Numbers 6; Leviticus 11, 21; Deuteronomy 16; Isaiah 11, 43; Jeremiah 23, 8; Malachi 1; Hebrews 11; 1 Corinthians 4; 1 Timothy 6; 1 John 4; 2 Thessalonians 3; Ezekiel 5, 13, 23; Revelations 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, 22). These passages, together with the Ten Commandments, define the principal behaviour, prohibitions and observances of the brethren. But before itemising these we should define the racial polarities intrinsic to this doctrine.

The black race, having sinned, was punished by God their Father. Punishment was meted out in the form of slavery, conquest, and control by the white man. The four pirates, John Hawkins, Cecil Rhodes, Livingstone and Grant brought the Africans to the Western world as slaves under Elizabeth I, who has been reincarnated as Elizabeth II. Her former beloved Philip of Spain, has also been reincarnated as her present husband, Philip, Duke of Edinburgh. The golden sceptre which belonged to the House of Judah in Ethiopia and

which carried with it the dominion of the world was stolen from Ethiopia by Rome — which then had world empire — and from Rome by Britain which inherited the Roman power. On the coronation of Haile Sellassie I in November 1930, King George V of Britain sent his son, the Duke of Gloucester, with this sceptre as a gift to the Emperor. The Duke of Gloucester, who is said to have succeeded George V as Edward VIII, while in Ethiopia wandered off into the bush, eating grass, thereby revealing himself as the reincarnated Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon. The Emperor Haile Sellassie, receiving the sceptre, simultaneously recovered the symbol of Ethiopian world power. In return, he is said to have given the Duke of Gloucester a small emblem for King George V. When the Duke returned to Britain and handed this to his father, the latter is said to have been stricken with paralysis and to have died shortly after, although it was some months before this fact was announced to the British public. The Duke of Gloucester then became King and, to fulfil prophecies, abdicated, knowing that he shall resume the throne after the reincarnated Elizabeth I to rule as the last King of Babylon and to witness its utter defeat. This is clearly apocalyptic, the Messiah being the Emperor and the instrument chosen for the destruction of Babylon being the Bear with three ribs (Rev. 13), that is Russia, which “will come to stamp up the residue thereof so that Babylon shall be a desolation among the nations.”

Babylon really covers the Western world. Extreme racialists include Russia but many do not. In its local form, Babylon is explicitly represented by the Government, the Police and the Church. Ministers are Antichrists and preach Antichrist. They are the agents for the mental enslavement of the black man. Their most vicious representatives are black priests, the oppressive allies of the white man. Both the white and black oppressors shall suffer the same fate. The original God of the white man was Adam-Abraham, the leper, Anglo-Saxon blood-sucker and slave-master. Pope John has inherited his role. All white men are evil, all coloured men are evil, some extreme racialists say all yellow men are evil; some black men are positively evil — these are the allies of the white oppressors. Others live in sin, not knowing that Ras Tafari is the Living God. These mental slaves nonetheless are Ethiopians who will be redeemed by the work of the Church Triumphant, which is the Ras Tafari brethren, and will be brought back to their own vine and fig-tree in Ethiopia. Recent events in the Belgian Congo prove the truth of Garvey's prophecy that 1960 is the year of redemption, and herald the future of the white man. The massacre of black men by the white South Africans at Sharpeville in April this year is merely the latest well-known example of how the white treat the black. This shall be repaid in kind. The worst people in Jamaica are the priests, the police and the false prophets who form the Government. Sir Alexander Bustamante and Mr. Norman Manley have shown themselves to be agents of the imperialists, merely concerned to facilitate foreign capital.

Zion is “on the side of the North, the City of the Great King” (Psalm 48). It is known to the uninstructed as Addis Ababa. Ethiopia is the prepared place for Israel, the heaven of the black man, just as Europe is the heaven of the

white man and China is heaven for the yellow man. Long ago the entire continent of Africa was known as Ethiopia; the white man called it Africa and carved his empires within it. Now these empires have crumbled. Africa is almost free. South, East and Central Africa are the last white strongholds but these shall surely fall quite soon. The complete collapse of white dominion in Africa is the direct effect of Haile Sellassie's will and word. This proves he is the Messiah, presently redeeming his people. "Africa for the Africans at home and abroad" — "One God, one Aim, one Destiny"; this proves that Marcus Garvey was a major prophet whose words are presently being fulfilled. It also assures the brethren that most black Jamaicans will soon accept their doctrine.

Jamaica was a nice island, but the land has been polluted by centuries of crime. For 304 years, beginning in 1655, the white man and his brown ally have held the black man in slavery. During this period, countless horrible crimes have been committed daily. Jamaica is literally Hell for the black man, just as Ethiopia is literally Heaven. Long ago pirates spoke of it as Mount Africa, the slave mart. This it still is. Although physical slavery was abolished in 1838 and Queen Victoria gave £20,000,000 to the island of which £14.25 million were earmarked for the repatriation of the black slaves to Africa, none of them or their descendants have ever been sent back. Instead, the Jamaican Government is forcing people to go to Britain, where their slavery will continue.

Black men are Ethiopians. Many do not know this. The brethren do, and claim an Ethiopian nationality, as the United Nations charter in its very first paragraph and in Clause 15 entitles them to do. "Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind . . . No distinction shall be made for the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country to which the individual belongs, whether it be independent, trustee, non self-governing or under any other limitations of sovereignty." (United Nations Charter). Brethren interpret this to mean that they individually can claim and are fully entitled to Ethiopian nationality. It is obvious that such claims require ratification by the Ethiopian Government on an individual basis, but there are many statements, such as that in the preamble to the Ethiopian World Federation Inc., which states that "Ethiopia is the divine heritage of the black people of the world" that can be cited as evidence of the Emperor's grant of national status. The important point is that this claim for Ethiopian nationality expresses a positive rejection of Jamaican citizenship and national status. Insistence on this Ethiopian claim is the measure of alienation from Jamaica. Only when the issue is pressed can we fully appreciate the intensity and depth of this alienation; and only when we examine the historical and contemporary context of this movement and its devotees can we understand the causes and conditions of this alienation.

It follows that the Ras Tafari brethren do not regard the Jamaican Government as their government. The true believers or extremists refuse to vote. To them, the two-Party system of which Jamaica is so proud is utterly discredited, and there is some fervent admiration for a one-Party state such as Egypt, Czechoslovakia, Russia or China. The Jamaican Government is re-

garded as the lackey of the British Government, since Jamaica, despite all its recent constitutional changes, remains a colony, is defended by British soldiers, and inspected by the Colonial Secretary, Mr. Ian Macleod. The only true Government is the theocratic government of Emperor Haile Sellassie I, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The Communist system is far preferable to the present capitalist system of the white and brown Babylonians. Dr. Fidel Castro is showing what can be done in Cuba, but for sixteen years Jamaicans have used their control of government merely to perpetuate and intensify slavery.

The only thing which will satisfy the true brethren is repatriation to Ethiopia. The Emperor has provided land for the black peoples of the West, especially for his worshippers. The Jamaican Government has refused to let the people go, since it wants to keep them in slavery. But as Marcus Garvey said, 1960 (or the '60s) is the time for redemption. If nothing is done, "Watutsi war dance going play here", even though the true believers will never use violence, since their doctrines and laws emphasise redemption by Peace and Love and their ruler is the Prince of Peace.

From these basic doctrines and orientations all the specific symbols and practices follow. The Ethiopian flag of green, yellow, red, is the flag of the Ras Tafari movement. Green represents the pastures of Africa, yellow represents the wealth of that land, red the Church Triumphant. Some flags, such as the Ghana flag, may also have a black star; this is not usual, but where found, the black stands for black supremacy as well as for Marcus Garvey's Back to Africa movement. The Emperor's photograph is always present; brethren often carry it around with them, together with pompoms or scarves of green, yellow and red which identify them. Beards and long hair are enjoined on men (Numbers 6, Leviticus 21); it is sin to shave or cut the hair. It is sin to touch the dead since Jesus said "Let the dead bury their dead". It is sin for black women to straighten their hair or for women to use cosmetics. Corinthians 1:iv says that women must always have their heads covered. Marriage in a church is regarded as sinful, not merely because the church is a Babylonian device, but because it is written, "Whom God hath joined together let no man put asunder" and it seems well understood that couples often separate. Concubinage is prescribed in the monogamous form, the 'wife' being called a Queen and being treated with great respect. Alcohol is forbidden, together with gambling. Wine may be drunk in small quantities. It is forbidden to co-operate with any Government except that of Ethiopia. Current Jamaican beliefs in obeah, magic or witchcraft are nonsense — these have no empirical validity. Revivalism, whether pocomania or Zion, is a deliberate propagation of Babylonian error through which the mental slavery of the black man is maintained. Pork is forbidden, (Leviticus 11). The 'herb' (ganja) is a gift of God, who enjoined us to smoke it in Genesis 8, Psalm 18 and Rev. 22. God Himself smokes it and we should do likewise to keep His Laws. In the same way, God does not shave his locks or beard and we must do likewise, since He made us in His image and it is sin to deface this by shaving, as do the Babylonians. Edu-

cation for children is dangerous, since the Babylonian schools enchain them mentally with false doctrines. Some extremists accordingly send their children to private schools run by teachers who are either adherents of this doctrine or sympathetic to it. For this they pay, knowing that their child will not be mocked or shamed because of long locks, beliefs or appearance. Sodomy is advocated by the priests of Babylon, notably the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Fisher. (cf. Anglican comments on Wolfenden Report). These are the ways of the white man and his God. The black man knows better.

Worldly possessions are not wanted in Jamaica. The only thing the extremist wants is immediate repatriation. Work is good, but not in the form of slavery, which in Jamaica is now represented by wage employment for unjust masters. What is the use of working when within two or three months we shall again be unemployed for another indefinite period? Property, such as land, if acquired here tends to tie the believer to the Babylonian slavery. To prepare for repatriation, reject wealth, property and everything Jamaica can offer. In fact it does not offer very much to black people. The true brethren share what they have with others in their group. They do not beg, they do not steal, they depend on God's grace for livelihood, knowing that He will look after His own, and that the ganja which they smoke guards them against physical illnesses, curing all complaints and giving them wisdom, love and understanding. It is because the white and brown men know that ganja has these properties that they have forbidden its use by the blacks and persecute the latter on this account through the police. Since the Jamaican police are mainly black Ethiopians working for Babylon, their persecution of the brethren constitutes a 'tribal war' instigated by the white and brown oppressors. Police are said to use and sell ganja for their own profit. So do the white and brown elite. The herb has been sanctified by Scripture and is freely used in Ethiopia, as magazine photographs and articles show.

The version presented above is the extreme form of the doctrine. Many people who regard themselves, and are regarded as Ras Tafari devotees do not share all of these views, and may oppose some of them very strongly. We have seen that even the Emperor's title is disputed. Some brethren regard him as God's Representative; the great majority regard him as God. Some brethren distinguish sharply between Ethiopia and Africa; some define black supremacy as a withdrawal of the black men from the countries ruled by white men. Many brethren hold that ganja is evil and befuddles the brain; one or two are puzzled by the failure of Government to enforce its own anti-ganja legislation. Many brethren value education for themselves and their children; some have demanded adult education facilities, including technical training; others, whose children have recently won scholarships to secondary schools, make genuine sacrifices to try to keep them there. Many brethren want wage employment in their particular trades and skills; many are willing to work with other brethren in co-operative units processing materials or buildings, but reject wage employment. Many brethren value literacy, oppose violence and crime. Some brethren are or have married in Church; some gamble, many do not oppose alcohol taken

in moderation. Many are willing to co-operate with Government providing that Government does recognise their needs, their doctrines, and desire for repatriation. Many value formal organisations, the clear definition and fulfilment of obligations. Some who regard themselves as brethren are not quite free from beliefs in magic, obeah or witchcraft. Some look for basic changes in the affairs of the brethren to the power of God (Haile Sellassie) through repatriation, others to negotiation between the Jamaican and Black African Governments, or to the Ethiopian World Federation in New York. Love and Unity, Peace, Equality and Justice, no exploitation — these are the essential common laws. The beard which is the precept or the wedding garment, is the fulfilment of the vows made to God. The Sabbath, commencing on Friday at 7 p.m. and ending on Saturday at the same time, is common to all; so is the taboo on pork. (Deuteronomy 16). The basic doctrines common to all brethren, whatsoever the degree to which they have been individually alienated from Jamaican society, can now be set out.

1. Ras Tafari is the Living God.
2. Ethiopia is the black man's home.
3. Repatriation is the way of redemption for black men. It has been foretold, and will occur shortly.
4. The ways of the white man are evil, especially for the black.

The brethren do not speak of people joining their cult. In their view, the doctrine is in them at birth but unfolds and comes into consciousness when they recognise the Emperor as God and themselves become fully conscious. When this happens, the convert makes a private vow or pledge to his God, usually to a photograph of the Emperor, that he will abide by the laws of God and the rules of the doctrine. Many are called but few are chosen, and for this reason many brethren do not fulfil all the laws, such as those regarding their hair. On this basis some differentiation is made between the "true", "partial" and "false" brethren, and this is sometimes expressed as the elect and the non-elect, or the priests and the members; but whenever these distinctions are declared, groups reject their applicability to themselves. All are one and one are all.

An important and extremely complex set of ideas cluster around reincarnation. Some brethren affirm that they personally and physically experienced the whips of the slave-drivers. These hold the doctrine of reincarnation illustrated already by reference to Elizabeth I and II of England and the two Philips, of Spain and Greece. Despite these illustrations, there is no general rule that an individual should have the same name on reincarnation. One Brother held that men are reincarnated through the male line, females through the female line; for this reason it is not possible for the brethren in Jamaica to be repatriated by reincarnation. Another man held that this doctrine of reincarnation was false on mathematical grounds, since there are not enough dead souls to meet the requirements of an expanding population. A third view

is rather more sophisticated: reincarnation is the reaffirmation of one's lost culture and traditions. In this view, the Africans brought to Jamaica had "our culture beaten out of us, our language, and all that our forefathers did. We reincarnate in this culture through Almighty God Ras Tafari".

All brethren who regard Ras Tafari as God regard Man as God. Man are those who know the Living God, the brethren. Men are the sinners who do not, and some of these sinners are the oppressors. 'Thirty Locks men' is wrong speech; correctly stated it is 'Thirty Locks man', for man is one, in God and with God. For this reason there are no leaders, only brethren and members. For this reason there is no belief, only knowledge, prophecy and inspiration.

Men die, being sinners. Man (the believers) do not die. For this reason the dead should be left to bury their own dead, since death only applies to sinners. God being Man and eternal, Man lives eternally, in the flesh as well as the spirit. Heaven, which is in Ethiopia, is waiting to receive the brethren. Duppies, ghosts and the like are nonsense. Prophecy has various forms, and sometimes dreams are messages.

We have now presented a brief synopsis of the Ras Tafari doctrine, as far as possible in its own terms. For us, the important thing is to relate this doctrine to the conditions and development of the Ras Tafari movement and its adherents, and not make any judgment about it. Our only concern is that we should have presented it clearly and accurately.